

5 CLAIMS:

Sub A 7 1. A system for managing policy services in an organization, the organization including a first network having a first set of resources and a second network remote from the first network having a second set of resources, the system comprising:

10 a first edge device associated with the first network, the first edge device configured to manage policies for the first network and the first set of resources in accordance with first policy settings stored in a first database;

15 a second edge device associated with the second network, the second edge device configured to manage policies for the second network and the second set of resources in accordance with second policy settings stored in a second database; and

20 a central policy server in communication with the first and second edge devices, the central policy server configured to define the first and second policy settings and monitor health and status of the first and second edge devices from a single location.

25 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the central policy server includes:

a log collecting and archiving module for periodically receiving health and status information from each of the edge devices;

30 an archive database coupled to the log collecting and archiving module for storing the health and status information; and

a reports module coupled to the archive database for creating reports based on the health and status information.

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Sub A 50 7 3. The system of claim 2, wherein each edge device collects and transmits health and status information in a predefined common log format.

10 4. The system of claim 2, wherein the health and status information includes network flow information of packets flowing through the edge device.

15 5. The system of claim 4, wherein the each edge device maintains a byte count of the packets flowing through the edge device, wherein the byte count is organized according to resources associated with the packets.

20 6. The system of claim 2, wherein the health and status information includes statistics on use of each edge device's set of resources.

25 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the reports indicate usage of the resources associated with a particular edge device over a period of time.

30 8. The system of claim 2, wherein the central policy server further includes means for determining when each of the edge devices is to transfer the health and status information to the log collecting and archiving module.

35 9. In a system including a first network having a first set of resources and a second network remote from the first network having a second set of resources, the first network being associated with a first edge device and a first database, and the second network being associated with a second edge device and a second database, the system further including a central policy

Sub A6 5 7 server in communication with the first and second edge devices, the central policy server being associated with a central database, a method for managing policy services in the system comprising:

storing configuration information of the first and second edge devices in the central database;

storing first policy settings in the first database;

storing second policy settings in the second database;

managing policies for the first network and the first set of resources from the first edge device in accordance with the first policy settings stored in the first database;

managing policies for the second network and the second set of resources from the second edge device in accordance with the second policy settings stored in the second database; and

defining the first and second policy settings and monitoring health and status of the first and second edge devices from the central policy server.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the monitoring further comprises:

periodically receiving health and status information from each of the edge devices;

storing the health and status information in an archive database; and

creating reports based on the health and status information.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein each edge device collects and transmits health and status information in a predefined common log format.

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